

CORNELL CHRONICLE



Chris Kitchen/University Photography

Sterifre Medical's Jonathan Green, left, Lionano's Yingchao Alex Yu, Lou Walcer, director of the Kevin M. McGovern Family Center for Venture Development in the Life Sciences, and Embark's Ryan Boyko enjoy a celebratory moment following the McGovern Center's graduation ceremony Nov. 13.

McGovern Center incubator graduates a trio of startups

By Blaine Friedlander | November 16, 2017

Cornell's **Kevin M. McGovern Family Center for Venture Development in the Life**

Sciences (<http://www.mcgoverncenter.cornell.edu/>) business incubator graduated three companies at a ceremony in Weill Hall Nov. 13. Embark, Lionano and Sterifre Medical join the McGovern Center's previous two graduates, Agronomic Technology Corp. and ArcScan.

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Provost Michael Kotlikoff gave the commencement address and conferred certificates.

"Incubation in early stage technology companies is a proven model for increasing the success and sustainability of startups. And these young companies ... bear this strategy out," Kotlikoff said.

"The three companies graduating today developed innovative products that reflect the breadth of exciting research going on at Cornell."

Kotlikoff reminded the festive crowd: "The McGovern Center plays a special role in Cornell's fulfillment of its mission as the land-grant institution to New York state. This mission dating back to the university's founding is to develop and disseminate knowledge for the benefit of people across the state and across the country."

New incubator alumni are:

Embark Inc., a dog DNA testing service, was founded by Ryan Boyko, the company's chief executive officer, based on research by his brother, Adam Boyko, assistant professor in biomedical sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine. Through genetic testing and analysis, **Embark**

(<https://embarkvet.com/>) offers pet wellness advice with comprehensive ancestry, morphological trait and genetic disease information for dog owners.

Lionano Inc. has developed a patent-pending, nano-engineered material for lithium ion batteries that improves charge capacity, extending battery life better than any material on the market today. It is environmentally friendly, cheaper and significantly safer than currently available materials. It was invented in the laboratory of Hector Abruña, the Émile M. Chamot Professor Chemistry and Chemical Biology, by Yingchao Alex Yu, Ph.D. '14 and postdoctoral research associates Deli Wang and Weidong Zhou.

Sterifre Medical Inc. specializes in sterilization and decontamination. The company was founded by Czeslaw Golkowski, Ph.D. '91. Using a “cold plasma” laboratory, medical and dental instruments can be sterilized at room temperature in half the time of autoclaves. **A cell phone can be sterilized** (<http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2016/02/new-desktop-sterilization-device-disinfects-cell-phones>) in about 10 minutes.

Also speaking at the ceremony were founding donor Kevin McGovern '70; Emmanuel Giannelis, vice provost for research and vice president for technology transfer, intellectual property and research policy; and Jocelyn Rose, director of the Institute for Biotechnology and Cornell's **NYSTAR Center for Advanced Technology** (<http://www.biotech.cornell.edu/cat>) in Life Science Enterprise.

The McGovern Center incubator helps companies develop their products, build their business plans, and strengthen management teams to achieve self-sufficiency or receive investments, said Lou Walcer, the center's director.

“All of these companies at one time were startups. All of these companies at some point were nothing more than a vision in the minds of their inventors and entrepreneurs,” Walcer said. “We’ve been fortunate enough to work with them, taking them pretty far forward. Now we have a triple graduation, indicating that the center is reaching its stride.”

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